

50TH WEDDING ANNIVERSARY OF
STEPHEN AND EMILY BARAN

HON. BILL PASCRELL, JR.

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 5, 1998

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call to your attention the momentous occasion of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Stephen and Emily Baran.

Stephen Baran and the former Emily Sarzensky will have been married 50 years on May 30, 1998. Their wedding took place on May 30, 1948 at the Holy Rosary Church in Passaic, New Jersey.

Stephen and Emily have been residents of the city of Clifton for 43 years, and both are active parishioners of Saint Philip the Apostle Church on Valley Road in Clifton.

Stephen worked for Athenia Steel before his retirement. A United States Army veteran of World War II, he is a member of the local American Legion. Emily has been, and continues to be, a dedicated homemaker.

They have two daughters, Nancy Felipe and Christine Beauvais, and are the proud grandparents of Stephanie Beauvais, Thomas Felipe, and Michael Felipe.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you join me, our colleagues, Stephen and Emily's family and friends, and the cities of Clifton and Passaic in recognizing the momentous occasion that is the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Stephen and Emily Baran.

TRIBUTE TO CAPTAIN AL GASTON

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 5, 1998

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to an outstanding patriot, United States Coast Guard Captain Al Gaston. This guy got a rather odd start for one who serves in the Coast Guard . . . he was drafted by the U.S. Army.

He served two tours in Vietnam, left the Army, went to college, then joined the Coast Guard. During Captain Gaston's command of Group and Air Station Corpus Christi, I have been impressed with his efficiency, his straightforwardness, and his extraordinary ability to exercise good judgment in any situation.

He was thoughtful about keeping my office apprised of situations as they occurred with regard to matters of security. He oversaw Operation Gulf Shield, the largest multi-agency counter-drug operation in the history of the United States.

As a former law enforcement officer myself, I am deeply aware of the price illegal drugs exact from our communities and our nation. Captain Gaston and I share a commitment to keeping drugs off the streets of our country. This native of Cuba, who emigrated here with his family in 1961, has carried out the policies of the United States in a professional manner; he is a true public servant.

The Coastal Bend of South Texas will miss his commitment and integrity. He is dedicated to the principles of democracy. He is the sort of leader who shows respect for the men he commands. Captain Gaston leads by example.

He worked incredibly hard, and with a cooperative spirit, with the agencies which formed Operation Gulf Shield. He is a talented diplomat and a dedicated family man. He is quick to give credit, wherever credit is due. He never fails to give out special awards to his men when they deserved it.

Al Gaston is a man of high integrity and value. He goes the extra mile for his duty; and he does his job well. I hope all of you will join me in commending this outstanding public servant and dedicated Coastie.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN EDWARD PORTER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 5, 1998

Mr. PORTER. Mr. Speaker, on June 3, 1998, I missed three roll call votes. Had I been present, on Roll No. 193, I would have voted yes, on Roll No. 194, I would have voted yes, and on Roll No. 195, I would have voted yes.

H.R. 3946—THE ICCVAM
AUTHORIZATION ACT OF 1998

HON. TOM LANTOS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, June 5, 1998

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced legislation to promote better business, protect consumers, increase the efficiency of the federal government, contribute to scientific progress, and protect animals. H.R. 3946—The ICCVAM Authorization Act of 1998—is a non-partisan, non-controversial bill that emphasizes the protection of human health as well as animal health by facilitating the acceptance of alternative testing methods.

Mr. Speaker, there has never been such an impressive marriage of diverse interests working together to supply the same legislation. I am honored and delighted that H.R. 3946 is supported by the Procter & Gamble Company, the Gillette Company, the Colgate-Palmolive Company, the American Humane Association, the Humane Society of the United States, the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Doris Day Animal League, and over 6.5 million Americans who have demanded viable alternatives to animal testing whenever possible.

Animal tests have been used for over fifty years by federal regulators to test for product safety. In the last decade, however, biotechnology companies have researched, developed, and manufactured alternative testing procedures that are just as effective as outdated animal testing, but these newer technologies currently have no established avenue for receiving approval by federal agencies. By continuing to promote antiquated, although generally accepted, animal tests, federal agencies have put up an unnecessary roadblock to scientific and technological progress and innovation.

Mr. Speaker, in an effort to eliminate duplicative efforts and to increase communication in cross-cutting levels of different Federal regulatory agencies, the ground-work for the

Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Validation of Alternative Methods (ICCVAM) under the National Institutes of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS) was laid by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Revitalization Act of 1993. The ICCVAM has functioned solely on an ad-hoc basis since that time and was the first body to establish criteria for the validation and acceptance of alternative methods.

This important committee has functioned well and recently completed a final report receiving acknowledgment from federal agencies. Under the NIEHS Applied Toxicological Research and Testing Program, ICCVAM Contracts were listed in the Federal Register: \$666,950 (year one), \$691,308 (year two), \$717,167 (year three), with two additional option years. In contrast, the NIEHS budget for FY1998 was over \$300 million. The ICCVAM is a body that more than pays for itself in terms of its worth to the Federal agencies and its contribution to industry and the public.

H.R. 3946 will raise the ICCVAM to standing committee status and thus we can continue to move forward into the next century recognizing and supporting scientific progress. For years, the regulated industries and the biotech companies that engineer alternative testing methods have endured a frustrating, confusing Federal process for test method review and approval. Despite the fact that many companies have committed themselves to ensuring human safety while decreasing the usage of unnecessary animal tests, the federal government has remained unresponsive to their concerns. Mr. Speaker, these businesses have petitioned Congress to authorize the ICCVAM, thus simplifying the process for evaluating new tests.

I have introduced legislation that, for the first time, provides for gathering information in a single body for agencies, companies, animal protection advocates, and the consumer. H.R. 3946 requires that agencies be accountable for providing the appropriate information regarding all regulations, requirements, and recommendations on the animal tests under their respective jurisdictions. Federal agencies with jurisdiction over toxicity tests would be required to review and identify all regulations that require animal use for toxicity tests and forward the list to the ICCVAM.

Mr. Speaker, by adopting this legislation, the Congress will demonstrate a commitment to increasing the health and environmental safety of Americans. H.R. 3946 will open the doors to more technologically-advanced methods of research that will more closely replicate the reactions of the human body than does the current research that is done on animals. When a method meets a specific endpoint for specific agencies, or needs multiple agency acceptance, the ICCVAM can encourage agencies to modify their recommendations and/or requirements to reflect the best new scientific methods.

H.R. 3946 requires that agencies notify the ICCVAM within 180 days of receiving the ICCVAM's recommendations. The ICCVAM does not mandate the acceptance of any alternative testing method; it requires that federal agencies consider the ICCVAM's recommendations on new test methods and provides strict criteria under which the federal agencies can reject the alternative testing method. Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, each agency under current federal